

Saudi National Soccer Team Willing to Go Training in Brazil

Contributed by Alexandre Rocha
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Saudi Arabia's deputy minister for Youth Welfare, prince Nawaf Bin Faiçal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, was in Rio de Janeiro last week to discuss cooperation projects with Brazilian sports leaderships. He is also vice president of the Football (Soccer) Federation and vice president of the Olympic Committee of the Arab country.

The prince's agenda was organized by the embassy of Saudi Arabia to Brasília, headed by ambassador Mohamad Amin Ali Kurdi. According to the public relations director at the embassy, Fahad Alessa, the deputy minister had several meetings with the governor of the state of Rio, Sérgio Cabral Filho, with the president of the Brazilian Olympic Committee, Carlos Arthur Nuzman and with former FIFA president João Havelange, among others.

Al Saud spoke to Brazilian sport officials about the possibility of the Saudi Arabian Football Team coming to practice in Brazil and about cooperation in the area of sports medicine, according to Alessa. He also talked about the 2014 World Cup, which will be held in Brazil, and about the Rio candidacy to host the 2016 Olympics.

During a dinner offered by the embassy at the end of last week, the deputy minister made contact with several personalities in the sports sector. Apart from Nuzman and Havelange, the dinner also included the presence of the captain of the Brazilian Team that won the 1970 World Cup, in Mexico, Carlos Alberto Torres; the center-back of the Team that won the 1994 World Cup, in the United States, Ricardo Rocha; the president of Vasco da Gama Football Club, Roberto Dinamite; the president of Botafogo Football Club, Bebeto de Freitas, now hired to be the executive director of Atlético Mineiro Football Club; the vice president of the Brazilian Football Confederation, José Maria Marin; and the Foreign Relations director of São Paulo Futebol Clube (SPFC), Carlos Alberto de Mello Caboclo.

The meeting also included the participation of the Foreign Relations vice president at the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, Helmi Nasr, and the organization's secretary general, Michel Alaby.

The prince's advisors also traveled to the city of São Paulo to visit the São Paulo Futebol Clube installations - including Morumbi Stadium and the Training center - and to talk to heads of the team that has just won the Brazilian Championship for the sixth time.

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